

Series II  
Subjects Files,  
1916-1973

Box 14, Folder 9

Correspondence,  
Letters received,  
1950 - 1951

0258

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
Office of Naval Records and History  
Washington 25, D.C.  
Room 2517

CHK No. 8

21 Dec 1950

Commodore R.W. Bates, USN  
Naval War College  
Newport, R.I.

Dear Commodore,

The retyping of the five pages of your section on "Information Available to the Allied Commander", with footnote references filled in, has been completed, and I am forwarding back to you herewith both the working copy which you sent to me and two additional retyped copies. I have retained one retyped copy for my file in case any further question arises in connection with my footnotes. The typist, apparently to avoid having to respace the text so as to make room for the footnotes, used legal-size paper instead of standard. If this inconveniences you, please let me know, and I will make sure next time that standard-size paper is used.

I took the liberty of making a couple of small corrections in your text. On line 8 of page 3, you had your numbers twisted around on the light cruisers. In the next to last sentence on page 4, I changed the word "completed" to "commissioned." I think this is preferable because the important fact is that Katsuragi, on that date, was both commissioned and assigned to Cardiv 1, thus becoming part of the Combined Fleet.

You will note a great deal of duplication in the source references, numerous documents being cited repeatedly. This was my primary reason for being so stubborn in favoring the use of a single footnote listing all sources covering the Japanese dispositions as of 26 September. That way, you would be burdened with only one long footnote. This way, you have numerous lengthy footnotes repeating the same source citation, something that seems particularly combersome when combined with the use of asterisks rather than numbering.

Some of this duplication could be eliminated through using the same footnote to cover the statements in the text regarding both the total number and the distribution of any one category of ships. In general, you asked for two separate footnotes on each category, one covering the total number and the other covering the distribution. However, both these things had to be worked out from the same sources for each category.

One further point: in your para (c) on page 5, where you discuss the CINCPAC estimate of 20 October, you say that "all battleships except the Ise and Hyuga were in the Lingga-Singapore area." This harks back to the question I raised in my Report No. 4, 21 Nov. As I pointed out, by 20 October the entire First Striking Force had displaced from Lingga to Brunei in preparation for sortie. Hence, it is strictly not correct to say that all battleships were in the "Lingga-

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Singapore area", unless it is clearly understood that this area, as defined, includes North Borneo. My guess is that CINCPOA, on 20 Oct, was not yet aware of the displacement to Brunei. At any rate, it strikes me that this aspect of the CINCPOA estimate of 20 October is at least as important as whether he correctly estimated the distribution of Japanese fleet strength as between Empire waters and the general South-east Asia area. This particularly if, on 20 October, the earlier estimate of 26 September that there would be no major reaction by the Japanese Fleet to our landing on Leyte still was entertained. The sudden displacement of the First Striking Force from Lingga to Brunei between 18 and 20 October, had it been immediately known, would have been a sure tip-off that this estimate was mistaken.

Your letter of 18 December has just come in, and I thank you for your Christmas wishes. In turn, permit me to convey my own best wishes for a gay and festive holiday season and for a highly successful New Year.

Sincerely,

(s) Clarke H. Kawakami,

Incl.

Original & two copies of draft,  
"Information Available to Allied Commander"

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND HISTORY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

IN REPLY REFER TO

Room 2517

CHK No. 9

8 January 1951

Commodore R.W. Bates, USN  
Naval War College,  
Newport, R.I.

Dear Commodore,

I received this morning your letter of 3 January and have, as you suggested, talked the matter over with Roger. He is writing you separately.

I feel that it would serve little useful purpose for me to try and answer your letter in writing. I have done my best to explain the Japanese translation problem in my earlier letters to you and in my brief conversations with you and with Commander Hartmann. I thought that my explanations were to some extent understood. However, I now see that we remain poles apart, and that a fundamental and complete rehashing of the problem is needed.

While personally I would be quite prepared to go up to Newport for this purpose, I could hardly transport with me the numerous and bulky Japanese documents which would be necessary to illustrate to you what I am talking about. Some of these documents, also, are being constantly referred to by Roger, so that their removal, even temporarily, would be inconvenient. Furthermore, since you appear to have full confidence in Roger's knowledge of the problem and understanding of your methods, I think that it would be much better if we could try to iron things out in a three-cornered confab down here. If it were possible, I would also suggest that Commander Hartmann participate, but I fully realize that his time must be well occupied.

I have been researching the Army command set-up and looking for the necessary documents to study the Japanese air dispositions and strength. However, I am now at a loss whether to continue with these or not. I therefore suggest that, beginning immediately, I go on leave without pay until such time as you can come down to Washington and we can straighten everything out. If we cannot reach an understanding, I shall hand you my resignation and do my best to assist you in locating a substitute translator. Also, I will be glad to introduce him to the documents and how to go about looking for others in the Archives.

Sincerely,

*Clarke H. Kawakami*  
Clarke H. Kawakami

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND HISTORY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

IN REPLY REFER TO

Room 2517

CHK No. 10

19 January 1951

Commodore R. W. Bates, USN  
Naval War College  
Newport, R.I.

Dear Commodore,

I was glad to receive your letter indicating that you hope to be able to come down here next week. A direct and thorough discussion of the whole problem of the exploitation of Japanese source materials, I am convinced, is the only way in which we can arrive at a mutually satisfactory working arrangement.

I have carefully studied your latest letters and that of Cmdr. Hartmann, and have also reviewed all our previous correspondence from the beginning, in an effort to clarify the problem in my mind. As I now understand it, the whole business boils down to the following:

1. You will no longer ask me for reports in which I assemble all the ascertainable facts on a specific subject, merely listing the source documents used in the exceptional cases where translation of all these sources would constitute too great and time-consuming a task. Example: my reports on the Japanese naval dispositions of 26 September and 20 October 1944.

2. Instead, you will require me without exception to furnish you with verbatim translations of all available documentary material containing facts or other data pertinent to your study, and you will yourself extract such facts or data as you need from these translations. I shall have to determine what documents or portions of documents are pertinent, having as a guide only an indication by you of the general subjects of inquiry (such as those listed in your old letter to Burrowes). Further, though I may translate extracts, such extracts must be lengthy enough to satisfy you that they are not "out of context".

This, I believe, pretty accurately sums up the manner in which you desire me to function. You yourself put it in a nutshell when you explained that I am to act more or less as a one-man Washington Document Center, the only difference being that I shall not only do the translation but also make the selection of material to translate. Your idea appears to be that, through such selection, the amount of translation can be reduced enormously. Cmdr. Hartmann "guesses" that only 20 to 40% of the total material will have to be translated. In your letter to Roger of the 11th, you voiced the opinion that many document translations need be only "a page or two".

I fear that both you and Cmdr. Hartmann are rather seriously overestimating the degree to which the volume of translation will be reduced by selection. To take a specific case from our recent experience, I can assure you that the actual translation of all the material which went into my reports on Japanese naval dispositions on 26 September and 20 October, even though it consisted of brief bits extracted from a great many documents, would have

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added up to a month's translation work, perhaps more. (I explained this to Cmdr. Hartmann when he was here, and I shall endeavor to explain it to you next week by actual reference to the documents.) The translations in this case, where pure and simple facts were concerned, moreover, would have yielded you nothing more nor less than was compiled into my factual reports. Let me inject here that I completely fail to comprehend your and Cmdr. Hartmann's suggestions that I am trying to usurp your sphere of analysis. My reports to date have been purely factual; I merely dug out the facts and arranged them in logical or convenient form for your purposes. It is true that, in my letters accompanying the reports, I have occasionally made some analytical comments, which you were of course at entire liberty to disregard. I gathered from your letters that you welcomed such comments, but they appear to have had the unfortunate result of confusing the issue.

But I am straying from the subject. I started to illustrate, by using my reports on the Japanese fleet dispositions as an example, how selection would not mean any great reduction of the translations required. Here, we were concerned with the dispositions on two specific days only. You have already indicated, however, that you may want to trace the movements of the principal Japanese fleet forces day-by-day as far back, possibly, as 1 October. The translation job for this will be correspondingly enormous, for it will involve the translation of virtually entire war diaries for the month of October, of units where available, and of individual ships where unit diaries are not available.

It also seems unlikely, in the case of action reports covering the Leyte battle, that selection can reduce substantially the amount of material translated. These reports deal in their entirety with the Leyte action, and everything in them is therefore pertinent in one way or another. What, then, can I omit from translation without running the risk of depriving you of some data which you might want? Hence, as a practical matter, the action reports will have to be translated virtually in toto.

It might be well to remind you here that the list of source documents which you originally compiled and referred to Washington Document Center for an estimate of translation time was by no means complete. The list was fair~~y~~ complete, perhaps, for the action itself from the time of sortie of the participating forces to the time of their return to base. But it covered little of the background development, planning, etc. which you propose to include in your study. Hence, this material must be added to the volume of translation work previously contemplated.

You appear perfectly willing to recognize that this vast translation job will take a single person several years to accomplish. However, in spite of this recognition, I am sure that you will want to have all translations covering a certain phase of your study completed by the time you need them or are ready to get to them, and that you will be inconvenienced and annoyed if they are not. Now, I do not shrink from hard work - even work as disagreeable as translating the abominable Japanese language - but I do not like to undertake anything with the feeling that I already have two strikes against me. I cannot help entertaining such a feeling when I am

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told that I shall be expected to operate as a one-man WDC. I question whether this is humanly possible.

I much appreciate the thought you have given to the matter of obtaining a regular civil service rating for me. I think, however, that it is best to leave things as they are in view of certain practical considerations. As Chief Historian for Japanese Operations in the Historical Section in Tokyo, I had the second highest rating in the section (P-7 or GS-14), just one grade below that of the section chief. My duties and responsibilities were, of course, commensurate with this rating, for I had under me more than a score of American and Japanese editors or writers, and I edited the final manuscript of a tremendous volume embracing all Japanese operations against General MacArthur, subject only to review by General Willoughby and the C-in-C himself. It consequently would hardly be in my best interest to accept a regular Civil Service rating substantially lower than that which I last held; and of course, since you desire me to function purely as a translator, a substantially lower rating would be inevitable. Unhappily, ratings are based not on what a person is qualified to do, but on what the job actually requires him to do. The moral, perhaps, is not to accept a job in which your qualifications will not be exploited to the full.

This letter is primarily intended to clarify certain broad aspects of the problem as a basis for our impending personal discussions. Pending your visit, I shall try to put my time to the most advantageous use possible in translating material pertinent to the seven initial topics of inquiry listed in your old letter to Burrowes. I think that this would be more advisable than jumping way ahead to the Mogami and Shigure action reports, which of course will have to be translated at a later stage when you get into the Leyte action itself.

Roger wishes me to tell you that he is unable for the moment to reply to your last letter since Capt. Morrison is presently here, and Roger is busy working with him. Incidentally, the Captain is lecturing tonight on the Leyte Battle, and I am planning to attend.

I am curiously awaiting your comment on my report on the command set-up. It is the only one to date for which you have not taken me to task. I trust that this silence is a good omen that, perhaps, it met with your satisfaction.

Sincerely,

*Clarke H. Kawakami*  
Clarke H. Kawakami

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND HISTORY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.  
Room 2517

IN REPLY REFER TO

CHK No. 11

14 February 1951

Commodore R.W. Bates, USN  
Naval War College  
Newport, R.I.

Dear Commodore,

I am forwarding you herewith two copies of the translated Mogami action report, typing of which has just been completed. It is not quite a full translation, but all sections or brief passages that were omitted from translation are duly noted in the translation, with a brief notation explaining what the omitted parts contained. I would guess that the translation amounts to roughly 75% of the original report.

It would be very helpful, I think, if you could spare the time to read through this translation as a sample and let me know if I translated everything of value to you, or if some of the parts which I omitted should have also been translated. It is also possible that I translated too much, and if so, I would be glad to know what specific parts you consider of relatively little value. Most of the Japanese action reports follow the same pattern, with a section breakdown similar to that of the Mogami report. Hence, if you would indicate which sections are of primary interest to you, and which are of lesser interest, it would help me in future to avoid any needless translation effort.

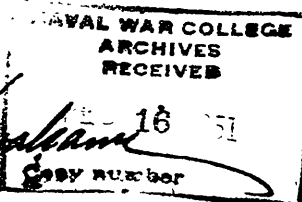
Please note that all parentheses in the translation are carried over from the Japanese original text. They are not mine. I am adopting the practice of putting any translator's notes inserted in the translation in brackets, prefaced by TN -, so that they will clearly be distinguished from any parenthetical passages in the original.

I have been looking around for a translator, but there are very few, indeed, who are available and who have the necessary qualifications. The most likely candidate so far is a Mrs. Tanaka, who worked for some time in the Allied Translator & Interpreter Section of G-2 in Tokyo. I have informed Comdr. Bromley about her, and you probably will be hearing from him shortly. We will have to pay Mrs. Tanaka about \$4600 a year since CIA has already offered her a job carrying that salary. If you can get authorization to employ a second translator in addition to Mrs. Tanaka, we could possibly get someone on a part-time basis, paying correspondingly less.

I have almost completed translation of Shigure's action report covering the Surigao battle. It disagrees with Mogami's report on some major points of fact, and of the two it appears the more correct.

Sincerely,

*Clarke H. Kawakami*  
Clarke H. Kawakami



Incl.

2 copies, translation of Mogami Action Report

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND HISTORY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

Room 2517

IN REPLY REFER TO

CHK No. 12

16 February 1951

Commodore R.W. Bates, USN  
Naval War College  
Newport, R.I.

Dear Commodore,

I received yesterday your letter of the 13th asking me to forward to you my translation of the Mogami Action Report. I had already sent it off the day before, and I trust that you have it by this time. The typing was done by this office and took a little time because the typists were hard pressed with a lot of priority work for Capt. Morison.

Herewith I am forwarding copies of the WDC translation of extracts from the First Striking Force Detailed Action Report, which I had retyped from the WDC translation file. The typing was finished here since it seemed improbable that Capt. Rankin's office would be able to get it done in the reasonably near future. They had had the file since late October.

I have gone through the WDC translation very carefully and corrected typographical and such other errors as I could pick up without having the original Japanese document at hand. As I told you, this is one of the key documents which are missing in the Archives. Without the original document, it is of course impossible to know how much of the original was translated, or to check the translation for accuracy. I would guess that the translation covers just one section of the original report, i.e. the section giving a summary record of the action. This section is the most valuable one for your purposes, of course, but the other parts of the report undoubtedly contained additional data that would have been useful to you. As regards the quality of the translation, my impression is that it is pretty fair, though the English in places is quite deplorable.

The WDC translation throughout uses "Diversionsary Attack Force" instead of "Striking Force". As I have previously pointed out, "Striking Force" is the more accurate translation. On p. 4 of the translation, you will find Combined Fleet DesOpOrd 363, which I previously translated and attached to my report on the Japanese command structure. My translation is a much more accurate one, and I trust that you will use it in preference to the WDC translation.

The Shigure report is giving me no end of headaches. The action summary contains a number of symbols which I cannot identify from any of the reference material here. It was finally necessary to copy the symbols and send them out to Capt. Ohmae in Tokyo with a request that he provide the answers. I also asked him to clarify the meaning of a number of technical terms.

Sincerely,

*Clarke H. Kawakami*  
Clarke H. Kawakami

Incl. 2 copies, translation WDC 161641

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND HISTORY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

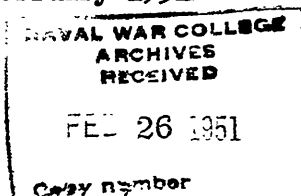
IN REPLY REFER TO

Room 2517

CHK No. 13

23 February 1951

Commodore R.W. Bates, USN  
Naval War College  
Newport, R.I.



Dear Commodore,

I received day before yesterday your letter of the 19th concerning my translation of the Mogami Action Report. Certain points in your letter, I think, call for some further elucidations on my part.

I am, of course, appreciative of your compliments on the quality of the translation, but I detect a strong note of doubt as to whether you can safely rely on my judgement as to what is of no value to you and therefore can be omitted. I would just like to point out to you, Commodore, that unless you are prepared to place confidence in my judgement to some extent at least, the sole alternative is to translate every single word, so that you can see for yourself. This, it seems to me, would defeat your very objective in hiring a person with my special qualifications. As a matter of principle, therefore, I think it is essential that you decide whether you will trust my judgement or not.

Actually, as in my Mogami translation, I will omit nothing without an explicit note indicating that such and such a part of such and such length has been omitted from translation. The note will also explain in brief the subject matter of the part omitted, so that if, by any chance, you think that it might contain something you need, you can direct that it be translated also. This, it seems to me, is the best way devisable to economize on translation effort and at the same time enable you to get every scrap of source material that you feel you need. Actually, it reduces my judgement in the selection of material to a minimum and gives you a greater control than you could achieve any other way, short of ordering full translations.

In your first paragraph, you mentioned merit reports as sometimes containing useful information. I presume that this was by way of comment on my omission from translation of Section VIII of the Mogami report, entitled "Achievement". However, a distinction should be made between "merit reports", which are reports drawn up by the Navy Board of Merit assigning merit ratings to the ships engaged in any given action and briefly summarizing what they did in the action, and the statements of "Achievements" contained in the action reports of the ships themselves. The merit reports represent the findings of an impartial board on the basis of the ship action reports and must therefore be rated as slightly more reliable than the achievement statements of the ships themselves. Still, the merit reports are generally so brief in summarizing ship actions that they will be of little value to your detailed study. It is the action reports that count. At any rate, the "Achievement" section of the Mogami report, which was but a paragraph of half a page in the Japanese, contained no facts not given in the other sections of the report. Its omission was therefore indicated.

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Regarding the diagrams included in the report, these were in both cases actual tracings of the Japanese document. I can, if you wish, send you my thin-paper overlays. I had them photostated because that is the only means of getting copies. The photostats were actual size, and not reduced; and I shall adopt this as a fixed rule if you feel that actual size is necessary in all cases.

Regarding the diagram of enemy dispositions in Leyte Gulf, as reported by Mogami's search plane on the 24th, let me make it plain that this diagram, exactly as I have reproduced it in translation, was in the original document. There was no textual message given in the Mogami report. If there had been, I certainly would have translated it as it was, and not go to the trouble of fabricating a diagram. Why the Mogami report used a diagram instead of giving the textual substance of the No. 1 Scout Plane message, I don't know. You will find the message given textually in the Shigure Action Report, my translation of which is finished and presently being typed.

Regarding the appended diagram of the action, this again was an exact tracing, and any errors you may find therein are not mine but the original's. I would like to point out, however, that the notation "0430 16 kts" on the diagram means that, as of that time, Mogami's speed had decreased to 16 knots, not that she had been travelling at that speed previously. If you will look at the diagram again, you will see that Mogami, after firing her torpedoes at you, reversed course to the south and withdrew at "full battle speed". She was normally capable of a speed of somewhere around 35 knots. However, shortly after she reversed course, she was hit by more shells and her speed reduced to 18 knots. As far as you can tell from the report, this is what she was making when she collided with Nachi at 0420. Now, this may not be adequate to make the diagram correct as regards the distance travelled between 0420 and 0430. But please bear in mind, throughout the Mogami report, that this document was drawn up afterward on the basis of the stories of the survivors and other data, without benefit of the ship's actual records, which went down with her. I think, on the face of it, that the whole diagram isn't worth two hoots. My impression is that Mogami never got anywhere as far inside the gulf as the diagram indicates. Shigure's diagram, which you will see, appears much more accurate.

I have tossed the ball to Comdr Bromley and Captain Renken on the employment of Mrs. Tanaka. I trust that there will be speedy action, for Mrs. Tanaka can start work immediately and appears extremely anxious to do so. A possibility which I mentioned to Bromley is that she be paid, for the time being, out of the funds from which I am being paid. Quite frankly, I am not enthused about working with Mrs. Tanaka, who has some of the more unfortunate feminine qualities, but I must admit that she appears to be the best qualified translator available in these parts.

Sincerely,

  
Clarke H. Kawakami

0268

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
Office of Naval Records and History  
Washington 25, D.C.  
Room 2517

(COPY)  
CHK No. 13

23 February 1951

Commodore R.W. Bates, USN  
Naval War College,  
Newport, R.I.

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Sincerely,

(s) Clarke H. Kawakami.

0270

# Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Commodore R. W. Bates

DATE: 19 Feb

FROM : Kawahami

SUBJECT:

Herewith a few more Combined Fleet orders pertinent to the background phase. Those picked up from the month of September were selected because of their bearing on the vexing matter of the allocation of forces. DesOpOrd 292 of 7 Sept tends to confirm a point I brought out in my last comments - namely, that the allocation of forces given in Combined Fleet OpOrd 84, 1 Aug, was just the organization which became effective from that date, and was not meant to be necessarily the allocation applicable to the execution of the SHO operations. DesOpOrd 292 indicates that Combined Fleet OpOrd 85 (and also OpOrd 91, which apparently modified 85) had appended allocation tables for the SHO Operations, probably specifying certain allocations applicable to different situations along the same line as MOBILE Force OpOrd 76. This bears out my contention that Comdr Mobile Force did not modify the allocations prescribed by CinC Combined Fleet.

CHK

(See folder marked CHK  
- Burton (2-19-52))

0271

# Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Commodore R. W. Bates, USN

DATE: 20 Feb

FROM : Kawakami

SUBJECT:

Herewith some more background orders and staff messages for 6FGB/2AF and Southwest Area Force. For 6FGB, this now gives you all the DesOpOrds for the period up to 17 Oct that are available, except for those contained in the Tokyo microfilm. I am going to translate these directly from the viewer, if possible, and will send them along shortly. There are about 20 DesOpOrds on the microfilm, which we didn't have in any of our documents.

Mrs Tanaka has been translating what 5FGB DesOpOrds we could find, and I shall forward a batch of these within a few days.

I should like to request that you return the typed copies of all this material to us as promptly as you can, so that it will be easier for us to see exactly what we have already done.

Sincerely,

CHK

(See Orange Folder  
marked CHK  
(2-20-52))

0272

# Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Commodore R.W. Bates, USN

DATE: 21 Feb

FROM : Kawakami

SUBJECT:

Managed to finish translating all 6FGB DesOpOrds contained on the Tokyo microfilm, which we did not already have, today. Spent the whole goddam day staring into the viewer and translating therefrom, and I must say that it is no easy feat, whatever Rochefort's ideas may be on the subject. Couldn't quite see my way to typing up the translation in the same operation, for I am getting too old for acrobatics of that nature.

Anyway, here it is. Hope Rochefort and Hatman will be pleased.

Sincerely,

CHK

~~7-11-52~~

FEC/MICROFILE. NO NUMBER.  
HIST DIV.

(See CHK  
2-21-52)

0273



## Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Commodore R. W. Bates, USN

DATE: 21 Feb

FROM : Kawakami

SUBJECT:

Herewith everything we have been able to find to date in the way of 5FGB despatches and staff messages of any value to this study. It is doubtful that we will obtain anything further since we cannot locate any other documents of 5FGB units. However, we will go on trying. A few more items may turn up fortuitously in documents of non-5FGB units.

Sources for the attached translations are:

Batch 1 (Sept orders, etc) - War Diary 23rd Air Flot, Sept 1944.

WDC 160264, NA 12546.

Batch 2 (Oct orders, etc) - War Diary 23rd Air Flot, Oct 1944.

WDC 160264, NA 12546.

Batch 3 (additional Oct orders, etc) -

War Diary 61st Air Flot, Oct 1944.

WDC 161643, NA 12260.

If you look at the appended table, Combined Fleet OPORD 86, you will see that Comdr 23rd Air Flot was Comdr North-of-Australia Attack Force (GAB), and

(over)

(See CHK  
2-21-52)

0274

that Comdr 61st Air Flot was Comdr Central Pacific Attack Force 1 (TLAB),  
both tactical forces under 5FGB.

CHK

0275

# Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Commodore R. W. Bates, USN

DATE: 26 Feb 52

FROM : Kawakami

SUBJECT:

Herewith typed copies of the first "summary-type" translations of some of the air unit detailed action reports covering the TAIWAN operations.

I would be glad to know whether you and Comdr Hartman don't agree that this method of extracting and summarizing the essential facts from each individual action report doesn't give you everything you need, and probably more than you need, from these documents. You get all the useful facts without all the unnecessary (pardon my French) crap.

Will try to polish off all the remaining action reports of air units for the 10-17 Oct period as speedily as possible.

Sincerely,

CHK

(See CHK-2-29-52)

0276

## Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : *Commodore Bates*  
FROM : *Newakerni*  
SUBJECT:

DATE: *2/26*

*Here are a few more 6 FGB Des Op Orders  
which I apparently failed to include with the  
others.*

*CHP*

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND HISTORY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.  
Room 2517

IN REPLY REFER TO

CHK No. 14

5 March 1951

Commodore R. W. Bates, USN  
Naval War College  
Newport, R.I.

Dear Commodore,

I am forwarding herewith three copies of a report answering the queries contained in the U.S. Air University Historical Division letter. I took some pains to do a thorough job, translating pertinent extracts from a sufficient number of sources to give a clear and well-documented picture. I also included rather lengthy explanatory notes which I felt were necessary to round out the story and prevent possible errors in utilization of the material. I trust that doing a thorough job now for the Air University will obviate the need of going over the same ground later for you.

Incidentally, I take great joy in proving Field wrong in regard to the identity of the Japanese cruiser bombed by B-24s on the morning of 25 October. There is no doubt, whatever, on the basis of the Japanese documents, that it was KINU and not ABUKUMA. The Army air people, at the same time, will get scant satisfaction from the Japanese evidence that the B-24s dropped bombs all around KINU and her accompanying destroyer, URANAMI, and didn't get close enough to cause the least bit of damage to either ship. Navy carrier planes sank both KINU and URANAMI the next day. The story, however, is just the other way around for ABUKUMA, so the Army fly boys will get some measure of consolation.

There is some progress toward Mrs. Tanaka's employment. She is apparently to be hired on a civil service rather than a contract basis, and Roger and I are to draw up a personnel employment request and a job description. This awaits Roger's impending return from a joy-ride on Comdr Shaw's destroyer.

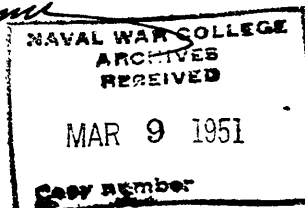
Typing of the SHIGURE Action Report translation is nearing completion, and I hope to be able to send it along to you shortly. I shall also be able, before sending it, to fill in the blanks I left in the translation, since I have in the meantime received a letter from Capt. Ohmae in Tokyo explaining the meaning of the symbols, etc. which had stumped me.

Thanks for your letter of 27 February. If I blew my top unjustifiably, please bear with me. Perhaps I am somewhat too much of a prima donna.

Sincerely,

*Clarke H. Kawakami*  
Clarke H. Kawakami

Incl. - 3 copies, report answering  
Air University queries



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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND HISTORY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.  
Room 2517

IN REPLY REFER TO

CHK No. 15

March 19, 1951

Commodore R.W. Bates, USN  
Naval War College  
Newport, R.I.

Dear Commodore,

Capt. Renken telephoned Friday afternoon and informed Roger that budgetary arrangements for Mrs. Tanaka's employment had been worked out at last. Mrs. Tanaka also contacted me a little while ago to let me know that she had received the good word from Civilian Personnel Branch and expects to begin processing shortly. So I feel fairly safe in saying that we shall have another translator on the job before long.

I am forwarding herewith translations of the basic Imperial General Headquarters directives and Central Army-Navy Agreements which set up the Sho Operations. These were included in my original list of the planning orders, and they are essential for the purpose of grasping the general concept of the Sho Operations. While your study of the Leyte sea battle involves only Sho No. 1, somewhere in your background section you will have to refer, no matter how briefly, to the overall Japanese plans of which Sho No. 1 was an integrated part. The basic high-level directives are therefore indispensable. From this point on, of course, Sho No. 1 is the only phase of the overall plans which concerns us.

Trust that you and Commander Hartmann are well, and that the work is progressing smoothly.

Sincerely,

*Clarke H. Kawakami*  
Clarke H. Kawakami

Incl.

2 copies, translations of  
Imperial GHQ Directives

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND HISTORY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

IN REPLY REFER TO

Room 2517

CHK No. 16

March 21, 1951

Commodore R.W. Bates, USN  
Naval War College  
Newport, R.I.

Dear Commodore,

I am forwarding herewith the usual two copies of my translation of the Shigure action report covering the Surigao battle. I know that you have been awaiting it with eager curiosity, and I trust that it will be of value to your study. Perhaps it will raise more questions than it answers, for as I have previously remarked, it contradicts the Mogami report in regard to numerous points. My own feeling is that, of the two documents, the Shigure report must be taken as the more reliable and authentic, if only because it was drawn up from the actual ship records while Mogami's was compiled largely on the basis of survivors' accounts, the actual records having been lost with the ship.

Thanks to prompt information received from Captain Ohmae with regard to the meaning of various symbols, signals, etc., I have been able to fill in the blanks which I left in my translation. Happily, I have run across no other action report in which these symbols and signals were used, the general practice being to write out the entries in plain language. So I do not anticipate a repetition of these difficulties in future translations.

As with the Mogami charts, I have traced the charts appended to the Shigure report and then had them photostated. In addition to the photostats appended to the translations, I am forwarding my actual "flimsies" traced from the Japanese original charts, of course with the Japanese notations translated into English.

Sincerely,

Clarke H. Kawakami

Incl.

Translation, in duplicate, of  
Shigure Detailed Action Report,  
and 2 track chart flimsies.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND HISTORY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.  
Room 2517

IN REPLY REFER TO

12 March 1951

Commodore R.W. Bates, USN  
Naval War College  
Newport, R.I.

Dear Commodore,

This is just a hasty and brief report on the status respecting the hiring of Mrs. Tanaka. We seem to have struck a snag somewhere along the line, and you may find it advisable to intervene personally in order to get things moving again.

From what we can gather, it appears that the Civilian Personnel Branch got instructions to hire Mrs. Tanaka, her position to be charged to the budget of this office. This last was something of a rude shock to Mr. Pineau and undoubtedly would be to Admiral Heffernan, too, if he knew of it, which he apparently doesn't. Admiral Heffernan has already indicated to Roger that he has no objection to providing office space for a couple of additional translators, and I think he likewise will not object to Mrs. Tanaka being placed in Op-29 for administration (time reports, payroll, etc.). However, I am quite sure that he expects the funds for her employment to come from elsewhere, and this was what Roger and I thought was to be the case. After learning from Civilian Personnel that they were planning to charge Mrs. Tanaka's position to Op-29 budgetwise, Roger called Capt. Renken to get a clarification. Renken apparently doesn't know the answer himself, although he presumably gave the instructions to Civilian Personnel. He promised to find out the score and let Roger know. That is where the matter stands at present.

Civilian Personnel wanted a job description for Mrs. Tanaka, so I batted one out last week and sent it over to them. They promised to cooperate in writing it up on the basis of a GS-9 rating, which we will have to give Mrs. Tanaka in order to get her. Actually, on the books, a GS-9 translator should be able to translate from Inner Mongolian, Hindustani and what-have-you in addition to Japanese, and the job itself should require it to be worth a 9. However, in this case, I think the extremely difficult nature of the material to be translated makes up for the fact that it is only in one language.

Mrs. Tanaka is hounding me daily to find out whether she will or will not be employed. In fact, she and her husband dropped in on me at home at 1030 on Saturday night and stayed until 0100, her husband making a huge dent in a precious bottle of 30-year old French brandy (Bas-Armagnac). So, I think you will understand the desirability of speedy action.

Sincerely,

*Charles H. Kawakami*

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND HISTORY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.  
Room 2517

IN REPLY REFER TO

March 15, 1951

Commodore R.W. Bates, USN  
Special Projects Section  
Naval War College  
Newport, R.I.

Dear Commodore,

This is just to report that the situation re Mrs. Tanaka appears to have brightened considerably.

The latest information we have from Civilian Personnel is that Mrs. Tanaka's job is to be charged to Op-34. We presume that this solution was reached with the consent of Op-34, although we have not received any official word from Capt. Renken to that effect.

I have just completed and forwarded to the Civilian Personnel Branch all the necessary papers (job description, request for personnel action, etc.) to permit them to go ahead and employ Mrs. Tanaka. I trust that there will be no further hitches, and that she will be able to get to work shortly. It will be necessary, before she starts on any translation, to read herself into the background and get a good idea of what it's all about.

After completing the Shigure report, I returned to the background phase of the study and have made translations of the basic top-level directives setting up the Sho Operations. These are essential for you to grasp the general concept of Sho No. 1. I now plan to translate a record of the First Section, Naval General Staff for the month of October 1944, recording daily military developments and intelligence data concerning enemy moves and dispositions. This file is entitled, "Material for Situation Estimates". I think it will be of value to you in determining "the information available to the Japanese commanders".

Trust that you received my report answering the Air University queries, and that it provided you with adequate information to forward on to them.

Sincerely,

*Clarke H. Kawakami*  
Clarke H. Kawakami

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND HISTORY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.  
Room 2517

IN REPLY REFER TO

March 16, 1951

Commodore R.W. Bates, USN  
Special Projects Section  
Naval War College  
Newport, R.I.

Dear Commodore,

It now appears that the information I transmitted to you yesterday, namely that Op-34 would provide the funds to pay Mrs. Tanaka, was incorrect, and the question of where the money is to come from is still up in the air.

This news is discouraging, but we are assured by BuPers that the money angle is still being worked on actively, and that if Mrs. Tanaka cannot be put on the Op-32 or Op-34 budget, BuPers itself will take her on its own budget as a last resort. So it would appear that in the end the business will be ironed out somehow. The question is how long it will take and whether Mrs. T will wait that long. (She rather impetuously quit her former job, thinking that this one would materialize right away.)

If this thing has any more ups and downs, I'll have to start using penny postcards to keep you posted up to the minute, perhaps using a code to indicate "funds provided", "funds withdrawn", etc.

Sincerely,

Clarke H. Kawakami

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND HISTORY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.  
Room 2517

IN REPLY REFER TO

CHK NO. 17

March 27, 1951

Commodore R. W. Bates, USN  
Naval War College  
Newport, R.I.

Dear Commodore,

I received your letter of the 21st toward the end of last week and immediately looked over the sources I have on hand to see if there was anything answering your queries concerning the Marcus Island attack and the effectiveness of Halsey's Okinawa strike. There was not a great deal, but it is enough perhaps for a rough answer. If you desire to go into it more thoroughly, it will require a search for additional documents in the Archives and Army Historical Division, and I do not know whether you consider the point of sufficient importance to warrant such an undertaking at this time. At any rate, you will be better able to decide this if I make a preliminary report giving you what I was immediately able to lay my hands on. Yesterday, I received your follow-up letter of the 22nd, enclosing the six pages of draft manuscript. It helps a great deal to have these before me as I can see exactly how the points in question arise.

First, did the Marcus Island attack have any diversionary effect? I cannot find any specific, concrete evidence on this point, but what indirect evidence there is points to the conclusion that it did not. Moreover, this conclusion fits in with what we know was the broad Japanese plan of operations at this time.

You will find attached, as Incl 1, a translation of the entries for 8-9-10 October in the daily record of war developments and intelligence reports kept by the First (Operations) Section of the Japanese Naval General Staff. Very fortunately we have this record for October 1944, though we don't have it for earlier months. This record was apparently kept filed under the heading, "Material for Situation Estimates", so it would appear reasonable to conclude that it gives a pretty complete picture of what the Tokyo Naval High Command knew. Especially valuable for the specific purpose of this inquiry on the Marcus attack, the record not only gives war developments and intelligence reports but also notes the action, if any, taken by central headquarters in consequence of specific developments.

The Marcus bombardment is duly recorded as the first entry for 9 October, but you will note that there is no mention of any counteraction on the part of the Navy High Command. This is in marked contrast to the first entry for the next day, 10 October, which records the strike on the Okinawa area and the immediately resulting Combined Fleet action alerting the naval land-based air forces for Sho No. 1 and 2 Operations. The inference is that, if any significant action had been taken in consequence of the Marcus raid on the 9th, it would have been recorded.

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Now, this may seem pretty slim evidence to you. But consider it in the light of the overall Japanese plans at this time, as given in the Imperial Headquarters directives and Army-Navy agreements, translations of which I forwarded to you just recently. The essence of these plans was that the Japanese would fight an all-out decisive battle in any of the Sho areas that U.S. forces might invade. They would conserve their air, surface and ground strength for this battle, refusing to commit any sizable forces ahead of the proper moment or in defense of positions outside of the Sho areas. In the Central Pacific area, in which Marcus Island falls, as well as in the other areas outside the Sho areas, the basic operational policy was to be to defend the key points with the forces already locally available, endeavoring to hold them as long as possible and inflict maximum losses on attacking enemy forces.

In the light of these fixed plans, the Japanese could hardly be expected to react significantly to any shelling of Marcus Island. On the other hand, it may be going too far to say that the attack not only had no diversionary effect but also alerted the Japanese to a possible attack on the Ryukyu-Formosa-Philippine area. If the carrier strike on the Ryukyus had been anticipated on the 9th after the Marcus attack, it seems logical that the Sho No. 2 Alert for the base air forces would not have been delayed until the strike actually began the next day. So the Marcus raid appears to have made no deep impression on the Japanese High Command one way or the other.

It does appear that the Japanese, though unalarmed by the Marcus attack, felt some concern over the sudden cessation of communications from the Kanoya search plane when it was some 450 miles southeast of the southern tip of Kyushu, roughly in the sea area between the Ryukyus and Bonins. This was considered significant enough to be recorded by the First Section, Naval General Staff, in its daily record - see Item 2 under date of 9 October (Incl 1). The incident was not enough to impel positive action by Imperial General Headquarters or Combined Fleet, such as the alert issued to the base air forces the next morning after the Okinawa strike had begun, but as you will note from the first paragraph of Incl 2 (translation of extract from Second Demobilization Bureau monograph), it did cause a localized alert of the Sasebo Base and Second Air Fleet units on Kyushu. It would appear from all this that the loss of the Kanoya search plane in the Ryukyus-Bonins area was more instrumental than the Marcus Island attack in putting the Japanese on their guard against a possible carrier strike in one of the Sho areas, but that neither was considered sufficient basis by the High Command or Combined Fleet to warrant alerting the base air forces for decisive action.

You may get the impression that the Japanese were somewhat sluggish in their reaction. If they suspected the presence of a U.S. task force in the Ryukyus-Bonins area because of the mysterious black-out of the Kanoya search plane, why didn't they go ahead and alert the base air forces just as a precaution? Well, your guess is as good as mine, but I think the explanation again harks back to the Sho plans. The Japanese were determined to husband their strength until such time as they felt that they had a tailor-made opportunity to deal us a crippling blow; and then

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they would go all-out. This means that they would not commit sizable elements of their air strength against minor carrier strikes (witness the earlier lack of reaction to our strikes on the Philippines in September). They had to be satisfied that the strike involved our main carrier forces, ~~which~~ and that it was in an area where the full strength of the Japanese land-based air arm could be brought effectively to bear. Now, the Ryukyus area was certainly the latter, but the evidence tends to indicate that it took the actual strike on Okinawa on the morning of 10 October to convince the Japanese that our main carrier forces were indeed involved. Even then, they acted with notable caution. They alerted the base air forces for Sho 1 and 2, but they didn't finally decide to launch all-out air action against Halsey's carrier groups until two days later, Oct 12th. This was a momentous decision for Admiral Toyoda, CinC Combined Fleet, to take. He was convinced that he had a "Heaven-sent" opportunity to cripple our carrier forces at one fell blow by committing all available naval air strength. (He still contends that he was right in acting as he did.) But he had to bear in mind that if he failed, the premature commitment of the base air forces would seriously compromise the successful execution of the Sho Operations proper, which would be activated only when we actually attempted to invade one of the Sho areas. This, in fact, was the way it turned out, and it is in my opinion the main reason why the air phase of the Japanese Leyte counterattack on 24-25 October failed so miserably, entailing also the failure of the surface operations. At any rate, this should be sufficient to explain why the Japanese reacted so slowly and deliberately to the Okinawa-Formosa strikes, to the point of appearing sluggish. They were determined not to go off half-cocked, because this was essential to the success of the Sho plans.

It would be highly interesting to know whether the disappearance of the Kanoya search plane led Second Air Fleet or any other air headquarters to order immediate additional searches to find out whether an enemy task force was indeed in the Ryukyus-Bonins area. Unfortunately, I have no documents covering this. The fact, however, that the daily record of the First Section, Naval General Staff makes no mention of any searches or of the spotting of the enemy task force before it actually began its strike on the Ryukyus seems to me to constitute fairly conclusive evidence that, if additional searches were carried out, they were unsuccessful in establishing any contact.

I find that I have already answered your second question as to whether Halsey is correct in his claim that he achieved surprise in the Ryukyus strike on 10 October. Since there is no evidence that the Japanese succeeded in spotting his task groups before they launched their strike, and since they issued no alert to the base air forces until after the attack had begun, the answer is unquestionably that they were surprised.

Now, your third question as to the effectiveness of the Ryukyus strike. In Incl 2, second paragraph, you will find a rather skimpy summary of the damage which the Japanese claim to have received. Please note that whereas

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the figures for ships sunk are specifically given as complete for all areas which underwent attack, the figure of 30 aircraft set afire (presumably on the ground) is given for Okinawa only. The major air installations, I believe, were on Okinawa all right, but there were probably other planes lost on the supporting airstrips on the other islands. These are the only figures I have been able to discover in the documents I have on hand, and as I said at the start of this letter, it will require quite a bit of looking around for additional sources in the Archives and Army Hist Div if I am to check and expand on the figures given in the monograph. We are, unfortunately, up against the hard fact that the available documents on air operations are decidedly skimpy as compared with those on surface operations. However, I shall be glad to undertake a search if you consider the point of sufficient importance to your analysis.

This morning I received your further communication of the 26th, somewhat expanding the questions posed in your two preceding letters. However, I think rough answers to them are included in what I have given you above. The small-scale strike on Aparri on 11 October cannot be said to have surprised the Japanese in the same sense as the first strike on the Ryukyus. The Japanese by this time had a rough idea at least of the strength of the carrier forces operating in the area, and the base air forces had been alerted not only for Sho No. 2 (Ryukyus and Taiwan area) but also for Sho No. 1 (Philippines), indicating that they believed the Philippines might also be hit. There may have been some measure of local tactical surprise achieved in the Aparri strike since the Japanese could hardly anticipate exactly what spot in the Philippines Halsey would choose to attack. On the basis of my research in Tokyo, I gathered that the Japanese considered the Aparri strike as merely a reconnaissance raid.

Your questions (2) and (3) have already been answered. With regard to (4), the answer is that there appears to have been no thought on the part of the Navy High Command or Combined Fleet of committing the Japanese carrier force (Mobile Force Main Body) against Halsey. In fact, as noted in Incl 2, Toyoda followed up the alert to the base air forces with an order for all operational air strength of Cardivs 3 and 4 to prepare for land-based operations. Now, I think it is true that the Mobile Force Main Body had not yet completed its battle preparations - it was still in the process of training its carrier air groups for carrier-based operations. But the main reason for its not sortieing against Halsey at this juncture was, I am quite sure, that the Sho plans called for the surface forces to be committed all together when an enemy landing attempt materialized. At this stage, the Japanese did not yet believe that an invasion move was impending.

Regarding (5), it was not the Japanese carrier force (Mobile Force Main Body) which "finally came out on the 15th". It was the Second Striking Force (Crudiv 21 and Desron 1). Its assigned missions were to destroy "enemy remnants" east of Formosa and to pick up Japanese air crews downed at sea. The mission to destroy enemy remnants was assigned on the basis

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of fantastic reports by the Japanese air forces that they had virtually knocked out Halsey's carrier groups. On the 16th, search reports indicated that this wasn't quite the case, so Toyoda hastily ordered the Second Striking Force to cancel its attack mission, refuel at Amami Oshima, and proceed to Mako to await further orders.


I realize that I am not providing you with the necessary documentation to support the last couple of ~~xxx~~ paragraphs. I could hardly do it on such short notice since I only received your supplementary questions this morning. I have given you the answers, however, and of course these points will all come out later as the documents are translated. The only question is do you want the pertinent extracts covering these specific points translated right away, or will you satisfy yourself with my answers now on the understanding - or should I say faith - that when the documents are translated later as we get to them, they will bear out what I am telling you. We are, I fear, getting back to the same old dilemma.

I will now terminate this preliminary report and send it on to you, so that you can decide how much farther you wish me to proceed with it. I shall be awaiting your reaction.

Mrs. Tanaka took a civil service examination in Japanese yesterday morning. They gave her something to translate from English into Japanese, instead of the other way around which would have been normal in view of the job she is being hired for. But always trust them to do things backward! It is unimportant, though, since Mrs. Tanaka can ~~xxx~~ translate either way with equal proficiency, which is something I cannot boast of myself.

I am definitely counting on the Martel or Hennessey.

Sincerely,



Clarke H. Kawakami

Incl - 2 Japanese document translations,  
in duplicate.

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